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MUNICIPAL COURT OF CHICAGO

Proof of Handwriting in Judicial Proceedings.—The following quotation from the report of the Attorney-General of the United States is self-explanatory:

"I recommend the enactment of a law making a uniform rule for the federal courts throughout the country respecting the admission of evidence to prove disputed handwriting. Briefly stated, the general common-law rule which prevails in some of the states is to the effect that in a case involving disputed handwriting, no genuine specimen of the handwriting of the accused person not already in the record, or that is not otherwise relevant, can be introduced as a basis for comparison. (*Withaup v. United States*, 127 Fed. 530.)

"In a recent letter on this subject the United States attorney for the Southern District of Iowa says:

"In many cases arising under the criminal laws of the United States the case hinges upon the question of handwriting, and a large number of such cases are found in enforcing the laws relating to the postoffice and postal service. The conviction of offenders in such cases is well nigh impossible, especially if the defendant is a criminal of experience in courts and court proceedings. As a rule they refuse to put their names to any paper connected with the record and refuse to make any written statement in connection with any matter connected with the case."

"During the first session of the Sixtieth Congress, there was introduced in the House, by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the following bill (H. R. 12676) relating to proof of signatures and handwriting:

"Be it enacted, etc., That in any proceeding before a court or officer of the United States where the genuineness of the handwriting of any person may be involved, any admitted or proved handwriting of such person shall be competent evidence as a basis for comparison by witnesses or by the jury, court or officer conducting such proceeding to prove or disprove such genuineness."

"This bill had the approval of my predecessor, and I earnestly urge that this or some similar measure be enacted into law.

"GEORGE W. WICKERSHAM, Attorney-General."

(From the Annual Report of the Attorney-General of the United States for the year 1911, p. 88.)

A. S. OSBORN.

Judge Kavanagh on the Causes of Crime.—In a warning sounded by Judge Marcus A. Kavanagh at a banquet given on December 6, 1911, in Chicago, in honor of Judge John P. McGoorty, Judge Kavanagh said "The law is so charged and clogged with harmful legislation and technicalities that justice is defeated. I want to call attention to concrete facts. A German's horse and cart were stolen and the case was fined \$1. A pawnbroker armed two burglars and set them to work. They broke into forty homes and were caught red-handed, but an 'inadvertance' in the judgment set them free by a ruling of the Supreme Court. There is a whole lot the matter with the administration of our criminal law, and the people are awakening and are looking to us judges and members of the bar to do something."

R. H. G.

Municipal Court of Chicago.—The annual report of Chief Justice Harry Olson of the Municipal Court of Chicago gives the following interesting items as to the volume of business done in this court:

There were filed during the year 53,223 civil cases; 50,931 were disposed